

Training – Essential But Often Forgotten



An essential element often overlooked in the area of technology deployment is providing adequate training for employees. It is not uncommon for new technology to be rolled out without appropriate consideration and planning given to training.

What's The Impact?

The impact of rolling out a new technology tool or process without training is that there is often a significant reduction in the productive gains anticipated with the deployment of new technology.

When people don't understand technology, they simply do not use it. Businesses and organizations cannot completely benefit from their investment made in computer hardware and software until key personnel are taught how to integrate computers into the overall business process flow.

During the planning process of technology implement (the point in which new technology usage is being conceptualized), take time to also assess the need for training. This should include having a thorough understanding of your user population and their current technology skill level.

“When people don't understand technology, they simply do not use it.”

Determining Skill Level

One method which can be used to assess the user skill level is the use of surveys. Surveys can be conducted to determine three key pieces of information: 1) overall computer knowledge, 2) the current application skill level, and 3) current user apprehensions of the future proposed changes.

The survey should extract data from personnel based on the specific application functions they are likely to use based on their current or future job responsibilities. Going through this process will help make certain that the right people are being trained on the right things and money is not wasted.

You will likely find mixed results from the survey. Some people who are just being introduced to computers will require fundamental training. You will also find other individuals who understand the basics but are not comfortable using certain application functions. In either scenario, they should receive customized training focused directly on the projects and tasks assigned to them.

Conclusion

Keep in mind that there are different methods of training delivery. eLearning is a popular training method which enables users to be trained in a convenient manner. This electronic training system is accessed on the computer either via the Internet or stored on the company network. Instructor-led training can also be a viable option when users need direction and personal attention from an onsite instructor.

By taking these steps, you can determine where you are going with technology and then make the necessary investment in training to get there much quicker.

The bottom line is that planning for training upfront can dramatically affect the outcome of a new technology rollout. A good tool will never be beneficial unless the users understand how to use it.